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BALCONY SQUARE

★ McLUHAN'S COUNTER BLAST

★ ROCK ONE REVIEWED

BALCONY SQUARE, JANUARY 15, 1970

Published by the Students of University of Scarborough

Scarborough Launches Drive For Funds

by Paul Scrivener

Scarborough College in conjunction with the University of Toronto has launched a fund-raising drive for the construction of new buildings and facilities.

The College wants funds so that it can forge ahead with its five-year expansion program. Working with the University, Scarborough will canvass private concerns as well as the Ontario Government.

The expansion includes a 500 seat theater, a recreation center for the College Union, student housing and sports facilities. Funds will also be used for increased library area, scientific research equipment, building furnishings and an art collection.

New scholarships and bursaries will also be started with the expected funds.

The Underground Railroad

by Saul and Kay

This is the start of a quest, a series of columns in quest of places where a food freak can eat and enjoy but on a university students funds. We, being Saul and Kay, hope to find places for lunches, early and late, dinners, elegent and intimate. We're going to find the places to go and we're going to tell you the places to stay away from.

To start our quest, we went to Bloor and Sherbourne, ten dollars in hand in search of an intimate dinner. There was Soul Food in the air as we descended to the Underground Railroad. Down below the street, its quiet, dark. The tables are small, the rooms are small, not close, but friendly small. The walls are rough plaster, the lights are lanterns, a replica of an Underground Railroad Station. The food is soul, traditional recipes from the Negro South. Its simple, but not plain, basic but not bland.

The food is an ingenious combination of basic food stuffs, food within the income of a Negro slave, and the spices and herbs of the south. The menu although exclusively soul, still offers a full dinner. Appetizers include chitlins, pig tails, pig feet and mushrooms and cod fish. The soup and corn bread are fantastic, essentials for the meal. The dinners offered are southern fried chicken, the best in Toronto, bar-b-qued ribs, smothered steak, chicken and ribs, baked ham and ham hocks. The prices range from $2.25 for fried chicken to $4.75 for steak. The dinners include a choice of two vegetables, all staples, but not at all like the vegetables your mother tried to get you to eat. Collard greens, black-eyed peas, casper squash, snap beans, red beans, home fries, potatoe salad, yams, rice. Beverages include great lemonade, orange slings, buttermilk and the usuals. If you have enough room for dessert there is sweet potatoe pie, cobbler, soul cake and field puddin'.

The Railroad is owned by John Henry Jackson (ex-Toronto Rifle), Dave Mann, Archie Alleyne and Howard Matthews (formerly of George's). Between the four they carry out most of the duties involved in the restaurant, they cook, serve and greet. Their policy is friendly. For every customer there's a friendly greeting, friendly, efficient service.

An evening at the Railroad is always enjoyable. The combination of the food and atmosphere never fails. The four owners are aware of what makes a good restaurant, they make sure the staff and restaurant are directed to this end. It is easy to become a regular of the Railroad. It is also financially feasible. From the $10.00, we still had $3.00. The Railroad is the end of the constant quest for your favourite restaurant.

P.S. There is no licence yet, but it is coming.

NOTICE

The Political Science Forum is in the initial stages of forming a Political Science Course Union. Interested Political Science students are urgently needed to help form a constitution, design new courses, and so forth. Your participation is essential to have an effective Political Science course in the very near future. If interested, fill in the space provided and drop off the sheets in room S 645 A anytime.

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McLuhan's Counter Blast

David Phillips

As a generator of excitement and controversy, McLuhanism is very much dead. The thoughts, however, live on, having permeated such diverse fields as educational theory, advertising and the Arts. In light of the first fact it might seem puzzling why anyone would wish to "probe" McLuhan at this late date. The second fact offers an answer. To anyone who questions the validity of McLuhan's offerings, the ready and unquestioned acceptance of them by various agencies and individuals is a discouraging and perhaps dangerous state of affairs.

The publishing of his new book, **Counterblast**, presents us with grounds to reopen his case.

In 1951 McLuhan let loose a tirade directed against the image-controlling echelons of society. In **The Mechanical Bride** he wrote,

it is observable that the more illusion and falsehood needed to maintain any given state of affairs, the more tyranny is needed to maintain the illusion and falsehood. Today the tyrant rules not by club or fist, but, disguised as a market researcher, he shepherds his flocks in the ways of utility and comfort.

McLuhan saw his own self-appointed role to be that of a seer who, like Poe's sailor in the **Maelstrom**, would point the way to an understanding of the interlocking character of the mechanisms employed by the various media. Only through understanding could man come to step out of the trance world that the media had created. He thus saw the agent of social change to lie within man's awareness. "Without the mirror of the mind", he said, "nobody can live a human life in the face of our present mechanized dream." McLuhan cashed out the concept of "human life" in terms of an integrated, collectivist, total and non-specialist existence, as opposed to the fragmented and alienated human personality found to characterize his own contemporaries. In short, McLuhan was an organicist who found himself in a mechanically splintered environment.

By the early 60's his animus had changed direction. No longer aimed at the media controllers he now struck out at those who lived blindly by the values of specialization, unable to see that the environment had undergone a metamorphosis, unfolding as an integrated pattern. His point of reference likewise changed, from the media content to the media themselves. In his own cryptic phrase, the "media was the message." As far as the role of the individual was concerned this new stage in his thought made little difference. Understanding was still a major concern and in this respect it acts as a constant variable in McLuhan's overall outlook. However, whereas in his early phase one's understanding had to be directed towards the media content — "ads carve men up into parts and sends each fraction to war against some other segment of himself. Distinctions between men become matters of consumption rather than any real basis" — it had now to be directed towards the media qua media wherein a de facto integration had actually taken place. Man was in fact integrated only he was not conscious of it by the fact that he still lived according to the fragmented categories of the "written" culture.

McLuhan has been under constant criticism concerning his attitude towards the individual. Construed as a technological determinist he has been said to

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BALCONY SQUARE

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THE RED CROSS IS PEOPLE LIKE YOU HELPING PEOPLE LIKE YOU

Editorial

The Joint Committee for Student Participation in College Government at Scarborough College folded last week in complete confusion. The only tangible solution that the committee could produce was the retention of the status-quo for government of this college involving students as an active and equal body in the college system. And the "status-quo" means that students will have very little if any say in the operation of this college. The "support staff", the people who are responsible for the physical, non-academic operation of this college, have been left out in the cold as well. Obviously the concern of some of our beloved faculty members for "academic freedom" has grounded the non-academic, "support staff" struggle for representation on college government.

The reasons for this abrupt anti-non-faculty feeling among the professors here at Scarborough seem to hinge on the issue of the CUG Report, the report which proposed student-faculty parity. Because of the rather ragged presentation of this report, its rather hasty and presumptuous arguments, the faculty have reacted in a panic of polarity and are extremely fearful of the chance this report's initiation would give the students at this university. Other faculty members are dead set on the report's importance as the basis for a new form of university structure, as the only possible solution to the problems of the contemporary university. . .however, these people remain in the minority or say little in defense of their stand on the issue. As a result, the Joint Committee was placed in the peculiar situation of buffer between non-faculty and faculty concerns. Any decision that this committee could come to would have to be presented to the respective poles, the non-faculty and the faculty council, for ratification. And because of the huge majority of faculty concerned with the implications of the CUG Report, any decision favoring students or the non-academic elements of the college ("support staff") could never meet with any support or ratification.

The Joint Committee was a farce to begin with. Its existence precluded an equality between the Faculty Council and the SCSS but it became extremely obvious that the Faculty council had more weight and would be the deciding body despite the feelings of the Student Council. Any hints at this psuedo-equality were quickly dispelled by the figures presented for consideration, in terms of representation, on some form of governmental body for non-faculty and faculty. The only acceptable figures for the scrutiny of the Faculty Council, in terms of percentage, were 75 per cent faculty, 25 per cent non-faculty. For many faculty members, these percentages were the only realistic conclusions to the problem of non-faculty participation in college government.

It is thus that BALCONY SQUARE will be so bold as to issue a warning. . .what are we going to do in five years when there are five-thousand liberal arts students here at Scarborough? By the collapse of the Joint Committee, it is assured that change in college government can not come by negotiation. . .is the only other alternative another Columbia or Berkely in five years here at Scarborough, a situation where the status-quo can only be changed by force? Let us hope that Faculty and Student opinion will change by then and we will be able to sit down and talk about it again, without resorting to violence of any kind.

Michael Clancy
Editor-in-Chief

Letter to Editor

Comment

on Bob Kligerman's article of Jan. 8 / '70

By Suzanne O'Donoghue
1st Year Arts

Wherever Mr. Bob Kligerman picked up the idea to make such narrow and absurd generalities about the differences between the Arts and Science students, I'll never know. Many of his remarks were unqualified, and his whole discussion just screamed "a big mistake."

Bob has labelled students in two major groups — fine — but then he went on and assigned them with definite characteristics and suggested little variablility within the groups.

Well Bob, your comment reeked with so much sympathy for the science student, that it is a safe guess that you are among its tired ranks.

Admitted that the serious interested science student does work, and suffer, hard and long. But wouldn't you admit that an interested and serious student in an "artsy" course, such as Anthropology, works the same way, and suffers just as hard and long? Or would you say that only your "more academically oriented science student" has a capacity for plugging harder and suffering longer? Of course not! How then do you justify your statements: "To the science student university is an academic struggle. Everything is important ... there is nothing that can be forgotten." Can't that be applied to many of the arts students too?

How can you possibly qualify your statement that: "The arts student, in his few hours a week, takes courses in which he is never really interested?" The last half of the sentence has to be the narrowest, most unqualified idea that I have ever come across.

So our courses "have no reality to today". Just what is your idea of reality anyway? Courses such as history, anthropology, and psychology do have reality to today, if one has the talent and intelligence to apply them.

You say the "artsy" finds himself free to spend many hours in the cafeteria." If many of my arts friends and I had done this, we could not possibly have passed our courses. In fact, I can safely say that a good deal of the "artsies" do not major in leisure time. Black circles beneath the eyes are quite common to both arts and science students, you know.

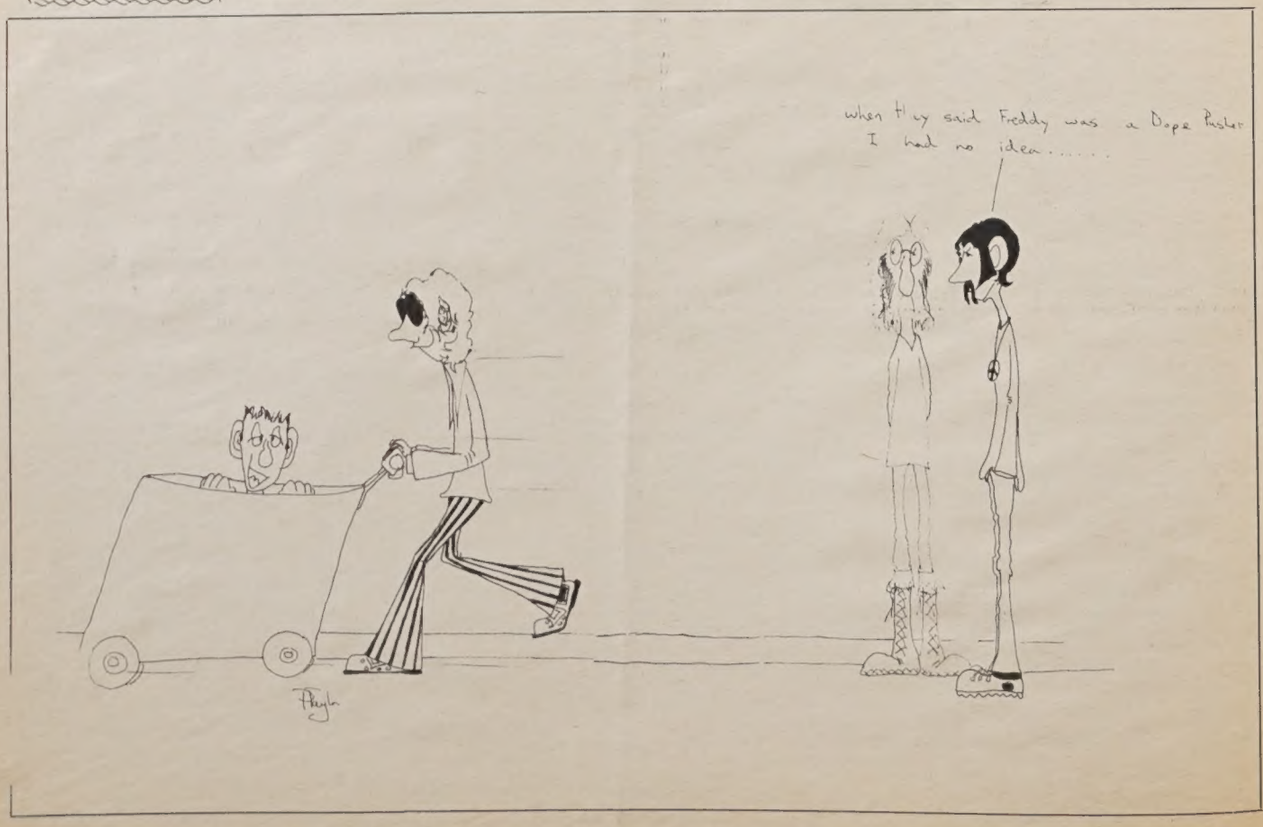
Your concept of the "artsy" was degrading, if not more insulting: "one who learns less and less about more and more until he knows nothing about everything." Do you profess that all science students are above this?

Who gave you, Bob, the superior competence to define all arts students this way?

In the future, would you please refrain from writing such unqualified garbage and keep your thoughts to yourself until they are justified enough to be printable? Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but would you please be more careful with yours?

The above comments are not the opinions of the editors of "Balcony Square"

(we luv ya anyway Bobby, you're doin' just fine. - ed.)



McLuhan's Counter - Blast

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leave the individual out of the process of social change. To this end McLuhan's latest book, **Counterblast**, sheds new light. On one level it is totally concerned with the role of the individual in shaping his world.

The title arises from the fact that the Electronic Media has reduced the old concepts of specialization, nationalism and individualism to a "cosmic baby powder." The trouble is that the powder gets in our eyes and doesn't allow us to see the new state of affairs. **Counterblast** then is simply a foil against which we can visualize our actual environment. In the first instance McLuhan makes a series of value statements throughout the book, **blessing** those who understand and live with the effects of the new electronic media, and **blasting** those who continue to live according to outmoded precepts. For instance, "Bless the Electronic return to the tribal Paleolithic Age, to the world of the hunter after the Neolithic Planter," simply translated means that electric rock music realizes and effects a tribal or integrated pattern instead of the specialized man such as the agrarian individual. He also states that with Sputnik the evolutionary process moved from biology to technology. "Evolution became not an involuntary response of organisms to new conditions but a part of the consensus of human consciousness. . .The Ivory Tower become the Control Tower of Human Navigation." Through a conscious effort, McLuhan sees that mankind can come to direct his environment. There is only one problem here and that is that this state of affairs has not come to pass. We must ask why and here McLuhan will be of no help.

What McLuhan points out is a disfunctional state of affairs between the media and the media content. The content continues to put out a fragmented program while the media themselves effect an integrated climate. The result is a contradictory "message" and to remove this disfunctional occurrence the former state of affairs must be changed. This is somewhat analogous to our economic situation as pointed out by many Socialists. Whereas our productive elements have evolved to a level where they can produce enough for everyone to live comfortably and whereas economic production is a social act the means of distribution and ownership are in a disfunctional relationship. The latter have not evolved in keeping with the former. The old state of affairs is beneficial to a certain elite group just as the content message of the media is beneficial to the media-controllers. The content-message of the media on the level of a standardized drivel has created not McLuhan's integrated man but the integrated **masses**. On the individual level, that which he earlier pointed out, the media-content have also fragmented man, and thus have not allowed him to unite with himself as a complete man who has realized his total potentialities. What we must realize is that in themselves the media, as far as their content goes, are neutral categories. In other words the content can either be of such a nature as to educate society, to allow each individual to cultivate his personal intellect to its fullest capacity or it can act as an intellectual leveller by putting across a great conglomeration of entertaining mindless junk. Thus understanding in which manner the media work is only the first step in instituting the social change which McLuhan desires. The necessary step is social action and this comes upon the realization that man is not only effected by the media but that he himself effects the media. McLuhan does not understand this fact. In **Counterblast** he explains the origin of new media in the following way.

> Technologies begin as anti-environments, as controls and then become environmental, needing the endless spawning of new anti-environments as controls.

They are supposed to create awareness of the environment but are themselves absorbed into the environment thus losing their revelatory power. This would seem to intimate that the media have a self-will, that they empower themselves. However an empirical scrutiny only attests to the fact that it is men themselves who create the new media and they create them not in order to control the old but in order to surpass the old in order to correspond to new social and economic functions. As concomitants of a greater economic system, media such as Television, radio and newspapers survive only because of advertising which uses the media in order to sell products just as other media such as roads, trains, boats and planes were created in part to move those same products.

It is doubtful that simply understanding the disfunctional nature of our media will change anything. In fact it is more than conceivably possible that the media controllers are fully aware of this state of affairs. As it stands, McLuhan's passive definition of the individual's role is little better than no role at all.

Counterblast
Marshall McLuhan
designed by Harley Parker
McClelland and Stewart Ltd.,
1969 $5.95

Rock One Take Two

Rock One, the CBC rock love-in, with your hosts Ian and Sylvia with inaudible guest appearances by Motherlode and Whisky Howl guaranteed to destroy their careers. Also in the same inaudible presentation Pentangle, Big Mama Thornton and Bruce Cockburn. Along with this great entertainment is one of the greatest audiences ever done by CBC casting and make-up.

The idea of Rock One was good. The assemblage of talent was good. Somewhere the producer took the idea and ruined it.

Technically the programme was worse than poor. As stated before, groups were either inaudible or so distorted by poor recording levels that the programme became irritating to watch. Big Mama Thornton didn't boom, she just sang. Pentangle weren't melodic and harmonious, they were a gentle hum. Whisky Howl and Motherlode both suffered. All these musicians were performing well but translated by the CBC technicians their performances were barely adequate.

The script of the show was equally weak. With as many performers as there was and in the format CBC was trying to produce, the programme would have been short at two hours. Motherlode and Pentangle especially deserved more time. Presenting single songs by both these groups made Rock One like every other network attempt at a rock variety show, something I think CBC was trying to avoid. Along with poor planning the Ian and Sylvia Tyson introductions were atrocious.

The most pretentious and aggravating part of the show had to be the audience, obviously hand-picked and directed by the CBC.

"As you come in the door, the girls can pick up their floppy hats on the right and the boys, their scarves on the left. Further down the hall you will pick up your stickers and sparklers. Please do not light the sparklers until you're told. Flowers will be distributed in the studio."

"Take two on this — this time when I throw you the Coke can, drop it."

"Take three on the breast feeding — this time honey with more compassion. Look like a mother."

"Hey you over there — how about taking off your shoes?"

The sets were direct copies of the Smothers Brothers Show, in the same format.

At four thirty on CFTO John Lennon was expounding the virtues of Canada. He said that of all the countries of the world he had the most hope for Canada. If John Lennon had seen Rock One, he would have given up all hope.

COMMENT
by
Monica Walburger

The world is not being taken over by machines. Rather, it is being taken over by office managers who make people into mechanisms.

During the Christmas holidays, I worked for IBM in one of the branch offices. My job as receptionist consisted of typing a few letters, answering the telephone, and ushering in visitors. I had to use an intercom to communicate with the staff when transferring telephone calls. But, I was not permitted to use names because everyone had a number. For example, someone would phone in and say, "Please tell number_105 to call number 30." That message goes on the intercom. If I had been given a number, I would have quit. This dehumanization is not necessary. Personal names could just as easily be used but one must follow company policy. The corporation rules!

Besides everyone having a number, everyone also has a tag. No one was allowed past my desk without a tag. All visitors had to sign in and out. Security was strict. Perhaps IBM makes more than typewriters and computers.

Procedure is law at IBM and no doubt in all large corporations. There is a book describing exact methods of letter writing. For example, never refer to "a factory", rather "a plant". And the worst of all is no letter may have a mistake in it, even if it is corrected. Anyone who has ever done any typing knows that it is impossible to type without one error. These rules are time-consuming and nerve-wrecking. Of course, rules are not just for the office staff but also for the factory — I should say plant-workers. There is a full-time nurse working at IBM and her cases are mostly nervous disorders.

This attempt to make people into machines is a very dangerous practice. It should be stopped.

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JESSIE WINCHESTER
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(2nd Act - Following the Band - Massey Hall - Jan. 17)

Canada and World Hockey - A Revelation

by Scott Bell

By now we've all heard the news reports, the commentaries, the cheering, booing and wailing, the passion and the rationale, the commending and the damning, the relief and the grief over Canada's withdrawal from international hockey. So what can I add?

I thought at first that I'd write a complete report on the situation for this article. But I'm sure that all of you who care (and when it comes to hockey, that's a lot of people), have your opinions and know of course that Canada is in the right and has been unjustly treated. (Tongue in cheek just a tiny bit).

Instead, I'll relate a revelation on my part from this event. And that is that I now have a much greater appreciation of the passionate power of sport.

Last summer we all scoffed disdainfully at the so-called "Soccer War" between El Salvador and Honduras in Central America. Previous to that conflict, we were incredulous at the often occurring soccer riots in Italy, Spain, Peru and elsewhere, in which dozens of people were actually killed. But all-out war between two nations of the world over a blinking soccer tournament?? If it wasn't so disgusting, ridiculous and tragic, it would be hilarious. (Estimates say that there were about 3,000 casualties in the war.)

Last week I was made very aware that hockey to a Canadian is like soccer to a Latin. In writing this article (because I am both a hockey fan and a Canadian), I sincerely have to contain myself because I am so inflamed over this World Hockey fiasco, that my emotions could easily run away with me.

Before I'm finished I'll have demanded our withdrawal from NATO, a denunciation of the IIHF by Trudeau himself, the recall of all our European ambassadors, uttered a goodly number of nasty words and even boycott Swedish movies (Yes, it's THAT bad). We won't withdraw from NORAD because the U.S. has given Canada a vote of confidence by declining the invitation to accept our place at the rescheduled Stockholm tourney. Now get this: POLAND will now be the sixth team! Egad. I would also dispatch the IMF to overthrow two certain dictatorships and establish democracies instead - (Bunny Ahearne, IIHF; Avery Brundage, IOC.) The only thing I wouldn't do is declare war on Eurasia. But that's ONLY because I know we'd lose.

I now possess some sympathy for the Latin Americans.

Europa delenda est.

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LICENCED BAR

ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION SPONSORS CAR RALLY

by Paul Scrivener

The Scarborough Athletic Association is running a 120 mile-long car rally this Saturday.

Starting and finishing at the College, the race will take three hours to complete. The rally features six check points which the cars must pass. The winner of the event must have the fastest time.

To date over one hundred cars have been entered. At least 200 participants have signed up at the Athletic booth.

First prize offered is $150 and the prizes include tickets to various shows and restaurants. A heavy spectator turnout is expected.

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